

MENTAL HEALTH LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

February 11, 2008 - MINUTES

In attendance: Council Members: Chairman Jacob Wagner, Jerry Johnson, Lori Marchak, Louise Brewster, Vicki DeBoer, Kathy Berg, Tom Peluso, Carolyn Robinson, Jan Bjork, Charlotte Kress Vickie Groeneweg and Commissioner Bill Murdock ; Advocacy Members: Dennis Cox (AMDD), Dorothy Eck, and Dan Aune (GMHC); Staff: Glenda Howze. Also in attendance: Pamela Cooper (GMHC), Mimi Welsh, John Watson (CALM4US), and Kristi Graham (BDH/MSU Intern).

Call to Order and Introductions - 12:00 PM. Chairman Wagner opened the meeting and allowed for introductions. Mr. John Watson introduced himself and noted that he is from CALM, welcoming the group to visit their website calm4us.org.

Public Comment - Ms. Kress stated that she noted in the Saturday Bozeman Daily Chronicle that the Montana suicide rate is double the United States rate. There was also an article on anti-depressants and how they are not working. Discussion took place regarding the suicide rates in Gallatin County and the reporting thereof. Mr. Aune noted that he is offering an opinion editorial piece to the Chronicle on the things that were missing from the article referenced. Cultural, isolation, and other aspects of rural states contribute to this discrepancy. There is also a lot of data to support that when services are offered, the numbers of suicides/attempts drop, especially in the Native American population. Ms. Eck noted that too often prevention programs end up unfunded.

Approval of Minutes (January 14, 2008) - Ms. DeBoer made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Berg seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Report from "Priority Table" Sub-Committee and Continued work on Priority Table - The subcommittee presented their revised table. 1) Open Drop-In Center for Mental Health Consumers: The 2 proposals approved by the LAC were sent from the MHC and MMHA, awaiting response. 2) Expand peer support recovery programs in county: Family to Family group is needed. Mr. Peluso stated that the upcoming NAMI training schedule which includes Peer to Peer, In Your Own Voice, and Family to Family trainings. He also noted that the Sheriff's Office is sending a group of people to Memphis for training. Mr. Aune noted that a group from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council went to Missoula to watch a Mental Health Court. He also stated that he has two grants in development to help fund MHC work in the jail. These grants could help fund more than 2 days per week in the jail. Courtney Duchaine has worked with 28 inmates at the jail. Of these 28, 15 are out in the community. 11 of the 15 are receiving services at the MHC and 8 are participating in group sessions. 4) Transitional Housing: There is a great need for transitional housing, including apartments close to the MH campus for easy access. 5) Transportation: In the past the LAC has discussed vans that could transport to the drop-in center, MHC for services, Montana State Hospital, etc. Is there an availability of this type of vehicle? Are there grants available to secure this type of service? Once a BHIF is in place, there may only be need (generally) for transportation from the Emergency Room to the campus and the van system could operate with consumer involvement as well. Mr. Aune mentioned the Public Transit Board and wondered if someone from the LAC shouldn't be a representative to that group as well. Commissioner Murdock stated that the more appropriate transportation group for this type of involvement would be the TCC, Transportation Coordinating Council. Mr. Peluso stated that in some counties they have an ambulance service do their transports. A hope with the BHIF here is that it will have 2-3 secure beds so that evaluations could be done locally - this would help reduce transportation to MSH significantly. Commissioner Murdock suggested that Jay Winchester and Lisa Ballard would be the best

contact people for this type of discussion. Ms. Brewster inquired about who to talk to about having Streamline go to Belgrade on Saturdays. Commissioner Murdock suggested that she attend one of the Public Transit monthly meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 4PM, City Hall. He also suggested that they talk to Lisa Ballard and David Kack about this concern and also address the request to the Belgrade City Council for additional funding support. He noted that this should be done now before entities enter the next budget cycle. 7) Public Education/Outreach: Discussion regarding efforts that could be made on this issue. Letters to the editor, program similar to the senior/long-term care show currently on TV, better phone book information, outreach - Newspaper TAB, similar to others like Prime Senior News or Balance, etc. Ms. Marchak stated that 25% of our community has diagnosed mental illness, 10% have been diagnosed with serious emotional disability, but 80% have some sort of mental illness of varying degrees. This needs to be an open discussion to the population in hopes of reducing the stigma and bringing about realization that mental illness is not just about severely mentally ill. Ms. Marchak suggested that for May - Mental Health Month - we focus on the theme "Mental Health for Everyone" in an effort to get this word out. Mr. Johnson stated that good people need to be aware that there are a lot of things that we go through and then we get better, but not everyone needs medication. Sometimes we just need information or someone to talk to. Ms. Brewster stated that the group that needs this information are the high school and middle school counselors and teachers. They need to know the signs to look for so that problems can be addressed at these early ages before they are adults and the problems are too developed. Ms. Marchak stated that the last Surgeon General Report on Mental Health noted that there is a lack of awareness, a lack of education and information. Mr. John Watson stated that WRAP is soon coming out with junior and high school age training. Ms. Cooper stated that perhaps a monthly blip in the newspaper would be a good way to FYI people on mental health issues. Mr. Peluso stated that in high school it is difficult to determine what is normal hormonal fluctuations and what is actual mental illness. Ms. Kress stated that seasonal affective disorder has become more commonly diagnosed. This might be an easy issue to open the door with for other discussions.

Report from Dan Aune on Meeting with Hospital on Campus Progress (and Recovery Grant) - Recovery Grant: This grant is directed at the Recovery Model and SAMSHA approved. The identified needs are employment and housing for a successful recovery. One effort is to coordinate a collaboration with another entity for job service "supportive employment" and they plan to use a vocational specialist to head this aspect. They have talked to Job Service, another local job agency, and Belgrade Career Concepts in hopes of creating a supportive employment atmosphere and goal to place people to work in the capacity that they are able to work in. The end result should be that they are eventually able to buy a house, a vehicle and secure education. This would be the base of recovery services. Mr. Johnson made a motion to support the MHC proposal and offer a letter of support for the recovery grant. Mr. Peluso seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Peluso reported that he and Mr. Aune met with the hospital after the last meeting and discussed the issue of transfer of title of the land. The hospital has interest to ensure that the property remains as a behavioral health campus. Rather than transfer title they agreed to a 35 year renewable lease and offered further support for infrastructure development expenses in the amount of \$275,000. Last Monday the group also visited with Paul Meyer and Patti Kent (WMMHC) and discussed further development on the property as well. They have engineering studies and geo-technical studies complete. The 5 acres is not fully developable. There is a drainage area through the center, so the central north/south area will be developed as open space/park area. The next step is to engage an architect for site planning for the BHIF, outpatient facility operation, children services and transitional housing. Mr. Peluso expressed concern about having a plan for development of the BHIF to provide fallback in the event that the funding stream doesn't continue. He plans to take a proposal to WMMHC on this. The proposal would include the current stability house (Hope House) increasing to 8 beds and moving into the

BHIF initially. They would provide urgent care during the day, commit 3 secure beds to the County, and have a remaining 5 beds to find funding for. This would result in 2/3 of the costs being covered.

Other - Mr. Peluso noted that there is a Super Summit on the 13th in Helena. The SAA, law enforcement, County Attorneys and others are invited. They ask that LAC's and others provide 4-6 priorities to be passed on to the Governor for consideration. Mr. Cox passed out a flyer on "Walking Hand in Hand" event March 1st. He will have a kiosk at the event so if anyone has information they'd like to have available for distribution.

Agenda for March Meeting - Mental Health for Everyone Planning Discussion

Meeting adjourned at 1:08 PM